ED2176/S

Guardian Log

Personal file of commander Everett Ducklair.

When I was recruited among the Guardians of planet Corona, the instructor said: "There's only one way to find out if you are suitable for the task..."

"Take away all that you have been taught, all that others have said is important..."

"... and leave you alone, in front of a problem, free to make your decision. Only in this way will you discover..."

THE WHOLE TRUTH

I - PK - 19SB

ED2176/S

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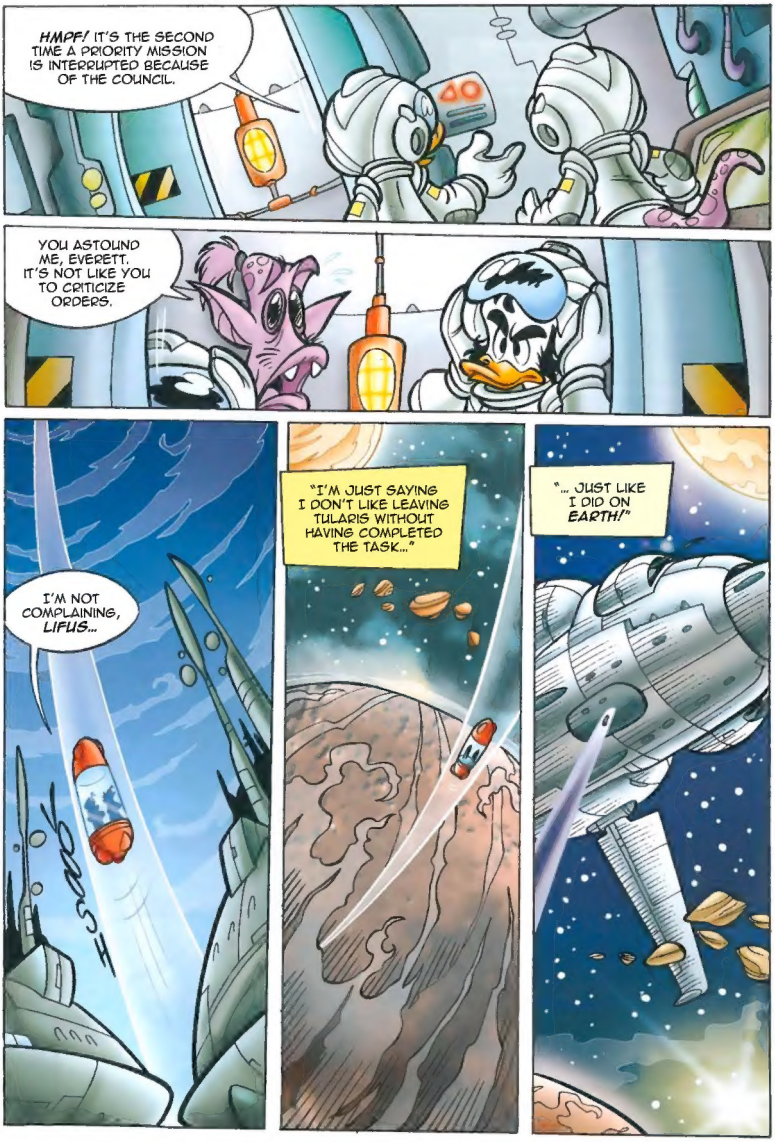
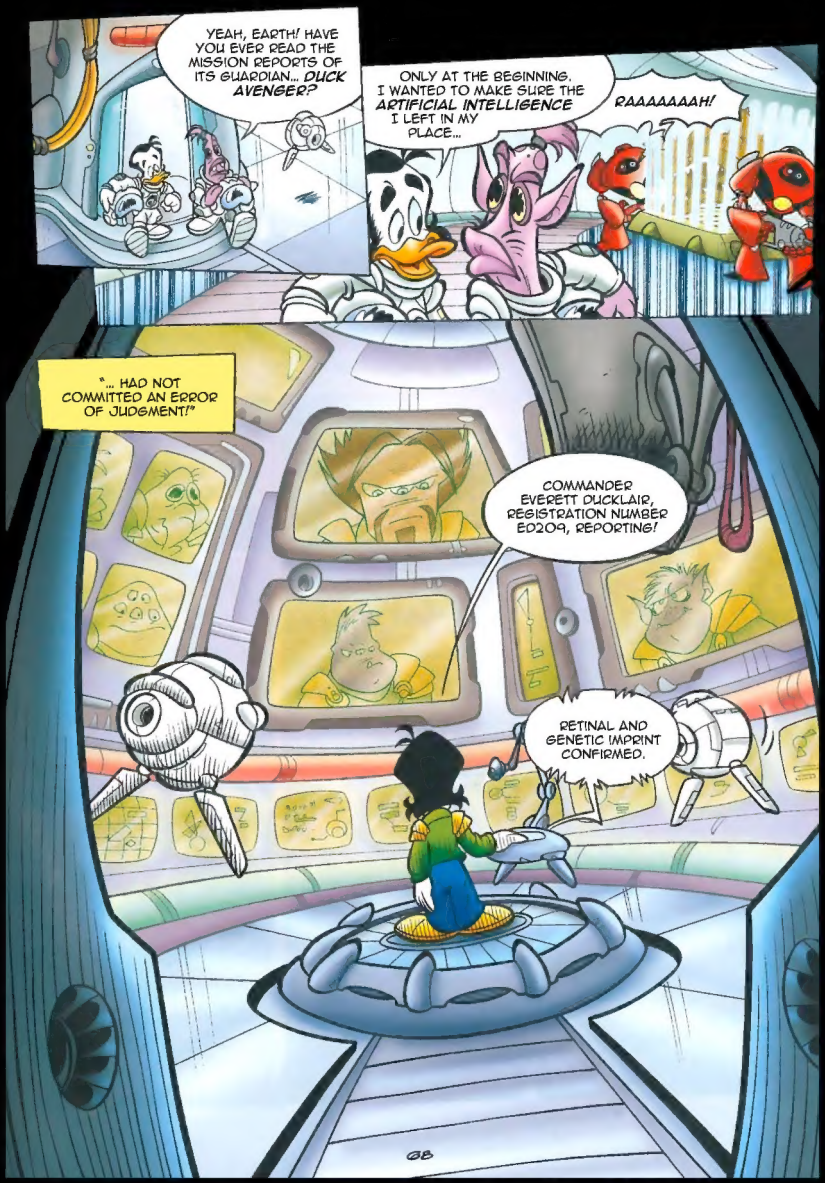
At the time I thought it was a bunch of bluster from the sergeant. It's ironic having realized how wrong I was on a planet where the Evronians have already taken everything!

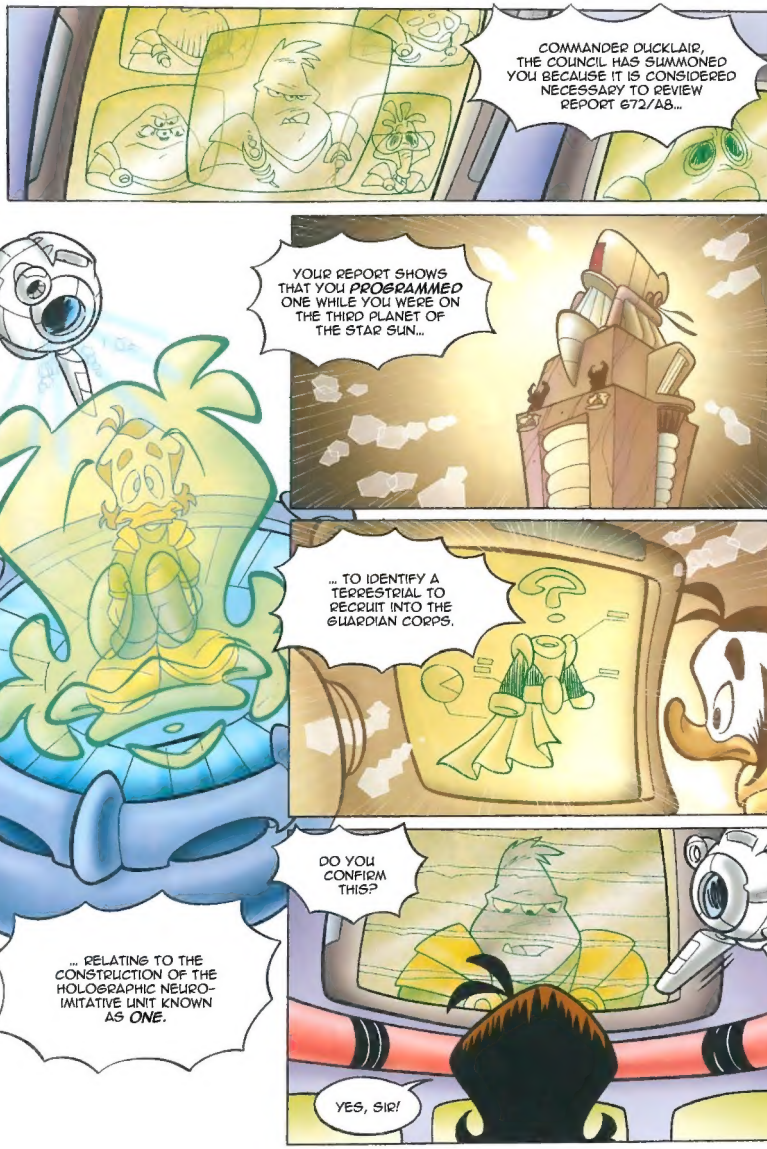
The evron troopers call it "anti-reconstruction infestation". When abandoning a planet, they disseminate it with Sarlak, parasites that devour any kind of vegetal and mineral...

In few months they render the planet forever uninhabitable. Unless the Guardians intervene to evict them!

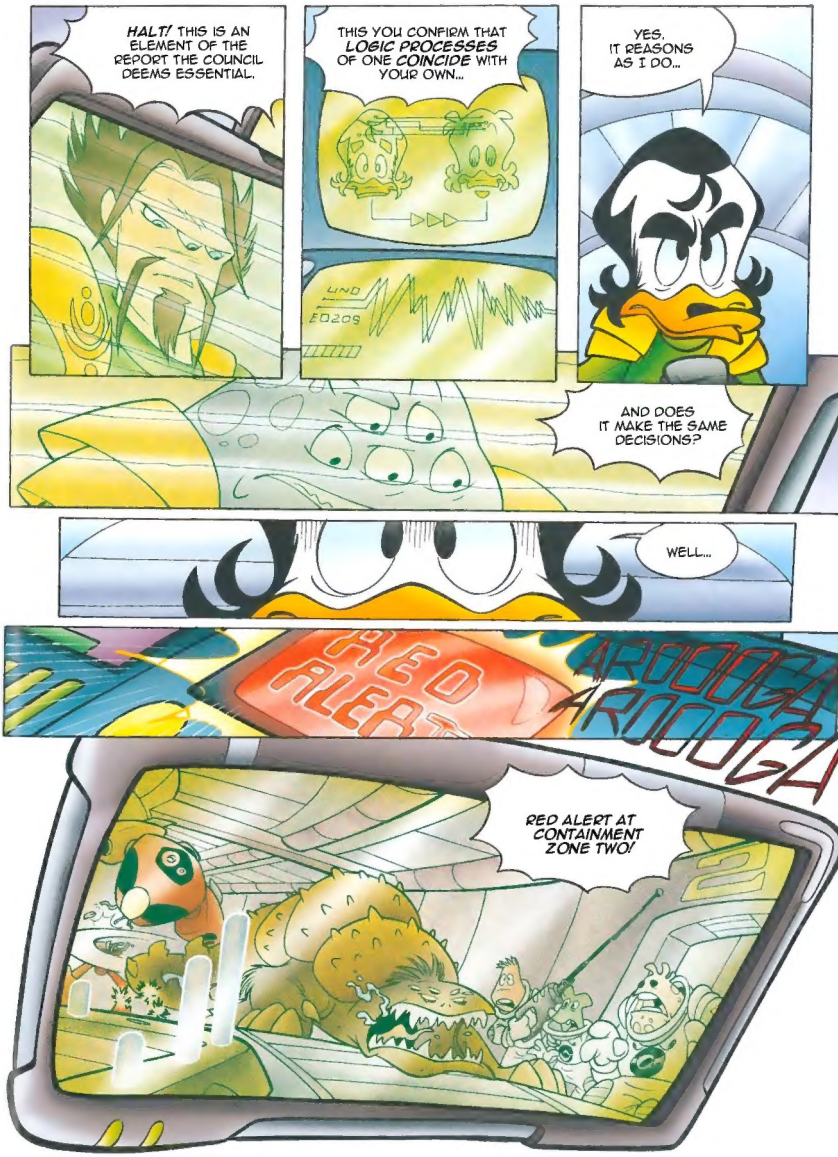
ANOTHER TWO SARLAK! HOW MANY ARE LEFT OUT THERE?
THE BIOSENSORS REGISTER FORTY-SEVEN AT THE SOUTH RIDGE.
WITH ALL THE WORK THAT I DO HERE, THIS CONVOCATION FROM THE CENTRAL COMMAND IS NOT WHAT I NEED!

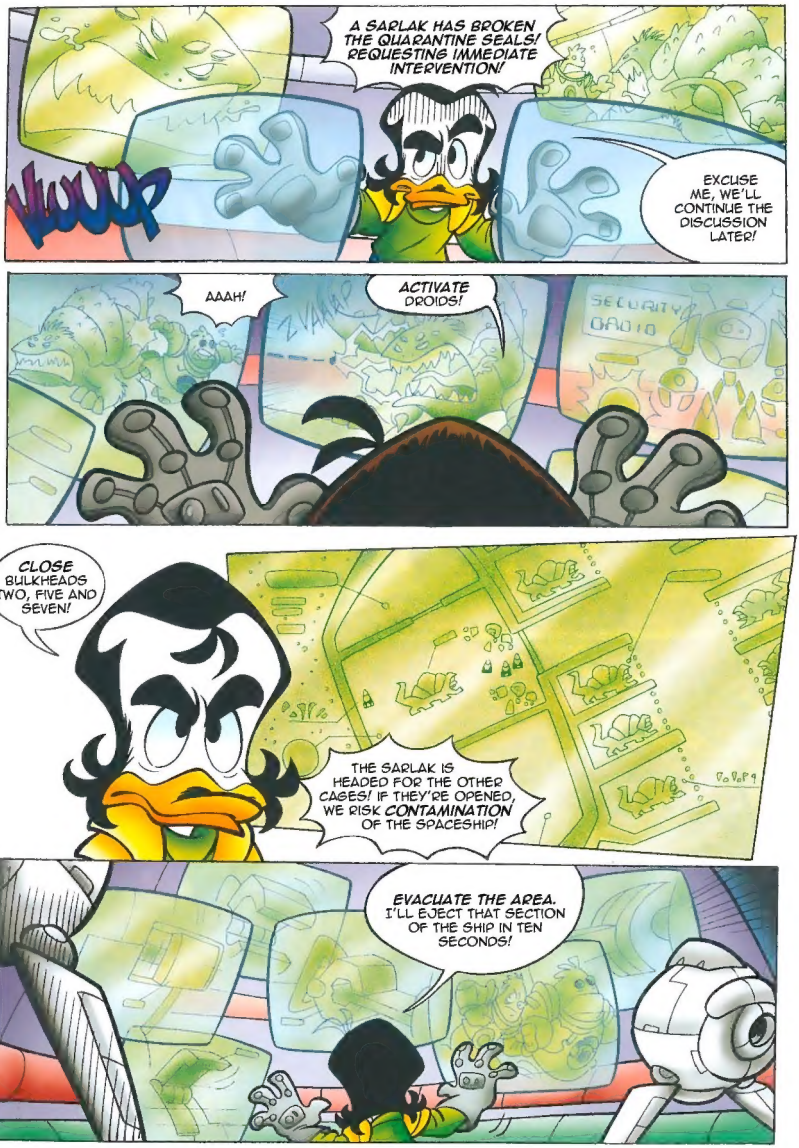

HMPF! IT'S THE SECOND TIME A PRIORITY MISSION IS INTERRUPTED BECAUSE OF THE COUNCIL.
YOU ASTOUND ME, EVERETT. IT'S NOT LIKE YOU TO CRITICIZE ORDERS.
I'M NOT COMPLAINING, LIFUS...
"I'M JUST SAYING I DON'T LIKE LEAVING TULARIS WITHOUT HAVING COMPLETED THE TASK..."
"... JUST LIKE I DID ON EARTH!"


YEAH, EARTH! HAVE YOU EVER READ THE MISSION REPORTS OF ITS GUARDIAN... DUCK AVENGER?
ONLY AT THE BEGINNING. I WANTED TO MAKE SURE THE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE I LEFT IN MY PLACE...
RAAAAAAAH!
"... HAD NOT COMMITTED AN ERROR OF JUDGMENT!"
COMMANDER EVERETT DUCKLAIR, REGISTRATION NUMBER ED209, REPORTING!
RETINAL AND GENETIC IMPRINT CONFIRMED.


COMMANDER DUCKLAIR, THE COUNCIL HAS SUMMONED YOU BECAUSE IT IS CONSIDERED NECESSARY TO REVIEW REPORT 672/A8...
YOUR REPORT SHOWS THAT YOU PROGRAMMED ONE WHILE YOU WERE ON THE THIRD PLANET OF THE STAR SUN...
... TO IDENTIFY A TERRESTRIAL TO RECRUIT INTO THE GUARDIAN CORPS.
DO YOU CONFIRM THIS?
... RELATING TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE HOLOGRAPHIC NEURO-IMITATIVE UNIT KNOWN AS ONE.
YES, SIR!

"THE SUDDEN CALL FROM THE COMMAND OF NAURYN THETA FORCED ME TO *INTERRUPT* THE SEARCH FOR THE TERRESTRIAL CANDIDATE."
JERRY DUCK
TOM DUCKWISE
"HOWEVER, KNOWING THAT THE EVRONIAN FLEET WAS LESS THAN A MONTH AWAY FROM EARTH, I FOUND IT NECESSARY TO LEAVE BEHIND SOMEONE ABLE TO *CONCLUDE* THE MISSION..."
"BEING THE ONLY AGENT OF THE GUARDIANS IN THE SECTOR, I DECIDED THE ONLY SOLUTION WAS TO CREATE A *COPY* OF MYSELF..."
"SO I DUMPED MY NEURAL MATRIX INTO ONE'S POSITRONIC MEMORY!"


HALT! THIS IS AN ELEMENT OF THE REPORT THE COUNCIL DEEMS ESSENTIAL.
THIS YOU CONFIRM THAT LOGIC PROCESSES OF ONE COINCIDE WITH YOUR OWN...
YES, IT REASONS AS I DO...
AND DOES IT MAKE THE SAME DECISIONS?
WELL...
RED ALERT AT CONTAINMENT ZONE TWO!


A SARLAK HAS BROKEN THE QUARANTINE SEALS! REQUESTING IMMEDIATE INTERVENTION!
EXCUSE ME, WE'LL CONTINUE THE DISCUSSION LATER!
AAAH!
ACTIVATE DROIDS!
SECURITY RADIO
CLOSE BULKHEADS TWO, FIVE AND SEVEN!
THE SARLAK IS HEADED FOR THE OTHER CAGES! IF THEY'RE OPENED, WE RISK CONTAMINATION OF THE SPACESHIP!
EVACUATE THE AREA. I'LL EJECT THAT SECTION OF THE SHIP IN TEN SECONDS!

WAIT! LIEUTENANT LIFUS IS TRAPPED.
HE WON'T BE ABLE TO LEAVE THE ZONE IN TIME!
IF YOU ORDER THE EJECTION, HE'LL BE THROWN INTO SPACE ALONG WITH THE SARLAK!
I HAVE NO CHOICE. I MUST FOLLOW THE ANTI-INFESTATION PROTOCOL.
CLANG

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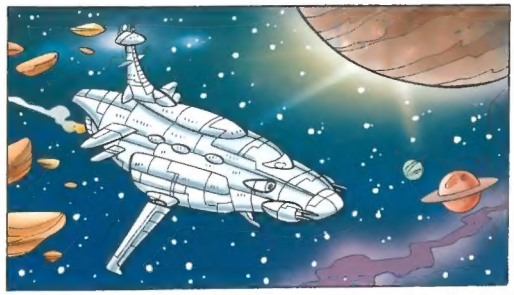
Guardian Log

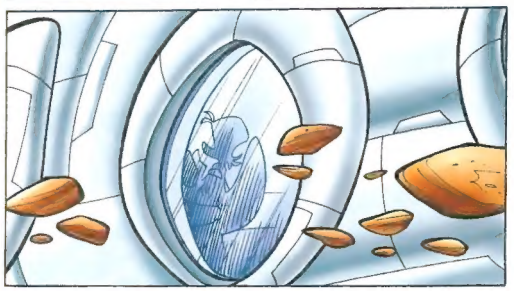
As my instructor said, when I made that decision I was alone in front of a problem...

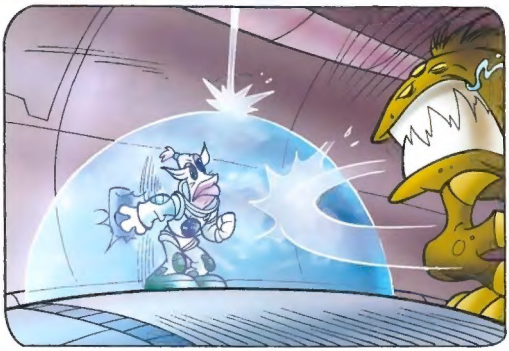
Choosing between saving a friend or obey regulation.

And I discovered the truth: to me the rules are more important!

But soon after I also understood another truth.







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Guardian Log

Lifus was never really in danger...

He had pretended to be in the mercy of the Sarlak, he deliberately allowed it to escape to test me.

Why?

Because the Council wanted to make sure there were no doubts in me to choose between friendship and duty.

In contrast to One!

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Guardian Log

Yeah! The artificial intelligence, programmed to reason like me, has frequently violated regulations to help the Duck Avenger!

Therefore it was indispensable to understand if this disobedient attitude is inherent in my way of thinking...

... or derived from an unforeseen development regarding One.

This experiment has shown the truth; One, by now, thinks independently.

For this he should be deactivated.

FINE